

Meeting Minutes

City Charter Amendment

Resident Advisory Committee

Regular Meeting

September 11, 2025 | 4:30 p.m.
Council Chambers Conference Room
88 E. Chicago St., Chandler, AZ



Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Lopez at 4:30 p.m.

Roll Call

Commission Attendance

Chair René Lopez
Committee Member Brad Davis
Committee Member Heather Anguiano
Committee Member Ursula Gordwin
Committee Member Sherida McMullan
Committee Member Lisa Askey
Committee Member Jim Jurnak
Committee Member Jennifer Pawlik
Committee Member Allison Stewart

Staff Attendance

Ryan Peters, Deputy City Manager
Jen Winkler, Assistant City Attorney
Jennifer Ekblad, Deputy City Clerk

Consent Agenda and Discussion

1. August 2025 City Charter Amendment Resident Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
Move City Charter Amendment Resident Advisory Committee approve the meeting minutes of the August 26, 2025, Regular Meeting.

Consent Agenda Motion and Vote

Committee Member Jurnak moved to approve the Consent Agenda of the September 11, 2025, City Charter Amendment Resident Advisory Committee Meeting; Seconded by Committee Member McMullan.

Motion carried unanimously (9-0).

Discussion

2. Discussion and Consideration of Potential Revisions to Charter Article VII, Nominations and Elections; Article VIII, Initiative, Referendum and Recall; Article IX, General Provisions; and Article X, Succession in Government

RYAN PETERS, Deputy City Manager, presented the following presentation.

- City Charter Amendment Resident Advisory Committee
- Agenda
- Article VII. Nominations and Elections
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COMMITTEE MEMBER PAWLIK asked if 7.01 (e) could be written more clearly.

COMMITTEE MEMBER JURNAK said this event has occurred in elections.

MR. PETERS said the League of Cities put together a working group to come up with a charter model ordinance language relative to determining who proceeds to the general election.

CHAIR LOPEZ suggested breaking the section into paragraphs to make it easier to read. He asked how a tie vote is addressed.

JENNIFER EKBLAD, Deputy City Clerk, said the state set a recount threshold for close elections. In a tie, it might go to the courts. The City Clerk's Office does calculations then notifies the county to determine need for a recount.

JEN WINKLER, Assistant City Attorney, suggested that in a potential tie election, it could go to a runoff election.

MR. PETERS continued the presentation.

- Article VIII. Initiative, Referendum, and Recall

CHAIR LOPEZ asked if there was a two-year residency requirement to run for office.

COMMITTEE MEMBER JURNAK responded that eligibility is outlined in another section of the charter.

MR. PETERS continued the presentation.

- Article IX. General Provisions

COMMITTEE MEMBER JURNAK suggested correcting the spelling in this section.

MR. PETERS noted the suggestion.

COMMITTEE MEMBER JURNAK asked if this could be reorganized into section 2.13.

CHAIR LOPEZ said this article talks about city positions not just elected officials but agreed that this could be better organized.

MR. PETERS explained that this is broader than the city council article.

MR. PETERS continued the presentation.

- Article IX. General Provisions
- Requirements of other Valley Charter Cities
- Potential Update
- Current Challenges Potential Advantages

COMMITTEE MEMBER JURNAK asked how many departments there are.

MR. PETERS said there are 15 departments plus appointed officers.

COMMITTEE MEMBER JURNAK asked if the residency requirement is clearly communicated in the hiring process.

MR. PETERS said it is made clear in all recruitments.

COMMITTEE MEMBER ASKEY asked about the requirement for the reasonable radius.

COMMITTEE MEMBER STEWART commented that remote work has opened more possibilities but worried about moving out of state or out of the time zone.

MR. PETERS said as long as someone performs during work hours and makes themselves reasonably available, there have not been any issues. There have been situations where individuals who are currently assistant directors opt out of competing for the director position due to the Chandler residency requirement.

COMMITTEE MEMBER ASKEY asked if there is any work for home options available for employees.

MR. PETERS said yes.

COMMITTEE MEMBER STEWART explained that living far away from where one is employed could be challenging.

COMMITTEE MEMBER MCMULLAN asked how residency is verified.

MR. PETERS said the address listed in an employee's HR profile. He explained that it is up to each department director to manage work schedules and remote work. It is situational depending on the operational needs for each department. There are some exceptions for certain departments such as IT.

CHAIR LOPEZ said remote work for IT is common. He clarified that there are three options: leave the language as is, 4 appointed officers, or just City Manager.

MR. PETERS explained that removing the residency requirement for appointed officers could improve safety for individuals with sensitive jobs that may benefit from having a protected address. He also mentioned that Council could compel the appointed officers to live in the city through their employment contract.

COMMITTEE MEMBER ASKEY asked if the contract opportunity would have to be outlined in the charter in order for it to apply.

MR. PETERS said yes.

CHAIR LOPEZ said the charter sets the baseline and Council may choose further requirements.

MR. PETERS said Council work with the four directly appointed officials through contracts. The rest of the city employees work for the City Manager.

COMMITTEE MEMBER MCMULLAN asked how succession planning for appointed officers works.

MR. PETERS explained that the appointed officers serve in their own positions, there is not a hierarchy.

COMMITTEE MEMBER ASKEY said the City Council is currently conducting a search for a City Manager.

MR. PETERS said the City Council has the prerogative to hire the City Manager however they choose.

CHAIR LOPEZ clarified there is no progression between appointed officers, someone would not typically go from City Clerk to City Manager.

MR. PETERS said the City Magistrate, City Clerk, and City Attorney are considered department heads as the charter is currently written.

COMMITTEE MEMBER GORDWIN commented that moving and buying a house in a certain city incurs high costs.

COMMITTEE MEMBER STEWART said this could be negotiated in someone's contract.

COMMITTEE MEMBER JURNAK said there are houses for sale in Chandler.

CHAIR LOPEZ said the city has to be competitive with other municipalities.

COMMITTEE MEMBER ASKEY asked if the six-month window is up for negotiation.

MR. PETERS said it is up to the committee. It can be situational.

CHAIR LOPEZ said there has been a situation where an appointed officer was granted exceptions due to extenuating circumstances.

COMMITTEE MEMBER JURNAK said granting extensions would work. It would be individual per person.

MR. PETERS said the city has experienced competitive disadvantages in hiring practices for this requirement.

CHAIR LOPEZ noted committee consensus was to pursue drafting an amendment for a residency requirement to apply to only City Manager.

MR. PETERS continued the presentation.

- Article X. Succession in Government

COMMITTEE MEMBER JURNAK asked if this is mostly related to the conversion from a city to a charter city originally. He suggested eliminating this section.

MS. WINKLER said much of this section is left over from the initial transition to a charter city, but some should remain. The entire thing should not be removed.

COMMITTEE MEMBER JURNAK suggested relevant chapters could be moved to other articles.

CHAIR LOPEZ asked about the legal ramifications of removing this article.

MR. PETERS said staff will research and return with more information.

CHAIR LOPEZ asked if 10.06 should remain.

MS. WINKLER said 10.06 addressing gender should remain in case anything is missed.

COMMITTEE MEMBER JURNAK asked for an opinion as to how this article could potentially be presented to voters.

MS. WINKLER said that will be discussed when ballot language is discussed, there are different strategies to bring amendments forward to voters.

MR. PETERS continued the presentation.

- Article X. Succession in Government
- Article X. Succession in Government
- Committee Review and Recommendation Process

3. Discussion and Consideration of Proposed Revisions to Charter Article I, Powers of the City, and Article II, City Council; Developed from Prior Discussion

- Article I: Draft Revision Language
- Article II: Draft Revision Language

MS. WINKLER explained the red text is what is on the November 2025 ballot. If it does not pass, it may be returned to the committee for consideration.

COMMITTEE MEMBER GORDWIN spoke regarding 2.08 and asked if the addition to consolidate, alter, or abolish departments according to operational needs of the city is consistent with City Manager establishing the qualifications, powers, and duties subject to the approval of council. The way it is written, the City Manager needs approval for action.

MS. WINKLER explained classification and compensation matters for employees are handled by HR at the direction of City Manager, and personnel rules are approved by Council which provides for methods for classification and compensation. Changes in classification and compensation are then approved by Council through the budgeting process. Both City Manager and City Council have a role to play in this process.

CHAIR LOPEZ said it may seem contradictory. He asked if it could be edited to have clearer intent.

COMMITTEE MEMBER STEWART spoke about the importance of communicating potential amendments appropriately.

COMMITTEE MEMBER JURNAK did not agree with removing a section from 2.13.

CHAIR LOPEZ said that would put it in conflict.

MS. WINKLER said it would conflict between resolution and ordinance.

MR. PETERS said this revision was discussed at a previous meeting, where the committee determined they would have department updates through resolution with Council approval.

CHAIR LOPEZ noted committee consensus was to remove the extra paragraph in Article 2.08 draft revision language.

CHAIR LOPEZ asked for the definition of journal in 2.12 (c).

MS. EKBLAD explained that it meant the meeting minutes.

COMMITTEE MEMBER JURNAK reaffirmed he is opposed to the draft revision language for section 2.13. He suggested a statement regarding the interpretation of the intent of Council in the legislative history.

MS. WINKLER said the court has its own requirements to interpret intent.

COMMITTEE MEMBER GORDWIN commented on the use of the word citizen in section 2.13.

MS. WINKLER said it is not defined in the charter.

COMMITTEE MEMBER GORDWIN suggested using different language to encompass meaning.

MS. WINKLER explained that different City Councils address this differently. Chandler does not have restrictions on who can petition the Council. The Council has some control it can exercise over this. She asked if it should be up to Council to set the rules and procedures for addressing them or putting out a specific requirement.

COMMITTEE MEMBER GORDWIN suggested replacing "citizen" with "person."

MS. WINKLER further explained 2.13 (k) and said this language was before the expenditure limitation era that started in the 1980s. Current home rule limits expenditures to the adopted budget and no more. The city is no longer allowed to spend more than the adopted budget whether it is done by ordinance or not.

COMMITTEE MEMBER ASKEY asked if this could be removed.

MS. WINKLER advised that an amendment to remove this section would be difficult to communicate to residents as the city budget is a sensitive subject.

CHAIR LOPEZ spoke about 2.15 and asked about the change made to publication requirements.

MS. WINKLER said there is state statute that requires publication in a newspaper that is printed or published within the city or town.

COMMITTEE MEMBER STEWART asked if there is a need to expand this requirement.

CHAIR LOPEZ said it is the bare minimum requirement that is set in the charter. More publication than this is done in current practice.

MR. PETERS continued the presentation.

- Set Next Meeting Date
- Thank you!

Calendar

4. The next Regular Meeting date, time, and location will be determined at the meeting.

The committee consensus was that the next regular meeting will be held on October 15, 2025, in the Chandler City Council Chambers Conference Room, pending location availability.

Public Comment

None.

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Ryan Peters, Staff Liaison

René Lopez, Chair